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DEPT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2019

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SUBJECT: INDIA SHARES CONCERNS, WILLING TO COOPERATE ON SRI LANKAN IDP RESETTLEMENT

REF: STATE 92641

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Les Viguerie for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Indian MEA shares USG concern over the situation of Sri Lankan Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and remains focused on getting them resettled. India is providing significant aid and is working to de-mine affected areas. There are plans to augment the GOI-funded de-mining efforts. While refusing to speculate explicitly about the possibility of convening donors in Colombo or forming a contact group, MEA Under Secretary Khampa indicated the GOI is open to the possibility of working with like-minded countries to encourage Sri Lanka to speed up the pace of resettlement. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) PolOff delivered reftel demarche to Indian MEA Under Secretary (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, & Maldives Division) Namgya Khampa on September 10. Khampa acknowledged USG concerns about the condition of Sri Lankan IDPs in camps and about the lack of progress on IDP registration, ID card issuance, and resettlement. Khampa noted that India shares the same concerns as the U.S. and is focused on IDP resettlement.

¶3. (C) Khampa did not comment on whether additional assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka might accelerate the IDP rate of return, but pointed out that India is monitoring progress in Sri Lanka carefully and has dedicated approximately USD 100 million in aid for 2009. This aid is mostly delivered as direct, bilateral aid, with some distribution done by the UNHCR and ICRC. Four GOI funded de-mining teams are on the ground in Sri Lanka now, and the GOI is looking for ways to augment that effort.

¶4. (C) Asked how the GOI would respond to the idea of convening donor countries in Colombo or possibly forming a contact group for Sri Lanka, Khampa affirmed that India is always open to working with like-minded countries, but would not speculate on specific proposals. She inquired as to the status of a recent Japanese proposal to host a contact group on Sri Lanka in Tokyo, commenting that the idea had made no headway within MEA because not enough specific information about the mandate and goals of the contact group had been

provided.

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Our Japanese counterparts had mentioned their initiative to us previously, but have since had to delay action on it indefinitely because of Japan's elections and likely policy review. The fact that Khampa inquired about it indicates some degree of interest within the MEA. She did not seem optimistic about India hosting such a group, but it might be an idea worth fleshing out and raising at a higher level with the MEA. END COMMENT.

ROEMER